

Meeting Summary of the SANBAG Board of Directors

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■ SANBAG shortchanged in first round of Proposition 1B allocations

Still reeling from the California Transportation Commission's decision last week to not allocate Corridor Mobility Improvement Account funding for the first phase of work to widen Interstate 10 east of Ontario, SANBAG Executive Director Tony Grasso outlined options to help the agency avoid being shortchanged in future rounds of funding through Proposition 1B.

"We must stand united," Grasso said. "If we are to succeed against much larger counties where we are outnumbered in legislative representatives, we need to rally around the same message," he said.

Funding decisions by the Commission on February 28 capped several weeks of see-sawing recommendations by the CTC staff. In the first round of recommendations released on February 16, CTC staff members listed for funding the I-10 Phase I corridor, two other I-10 projects and connecting ramps between Route 210 and Interstate 215. No funding was recommended to widen I-215. Desert projects also were rejected by CTC staff.

The second round of staff recommendations on February 26 told a different story: the I-10 Phase I corridor project was dropped, but the I-215 widening project was added. SANBAG representatives had lobbied to fund both I-215 and I-10, as well as the desert projects on I-15 and Route 58. The CTC approved this list, which granted \$175 million to SANBAG, far less than had been anticipated.

Board members expressed dismay at the funding outcome and sought answers. Grasso proposed strategies to boost the likelihood of securing funds through the next competitive round, the Trade Corridors Improvement Fund. He recommended meeting with CTC commissions and staff, meeting more frequently with area legislators, seeking stronger support for the business community and continuing leadership efforts in the freight movement arena to help secure more funding in the future.

■ Cook honored for five years of SANBAG service



Board members congratulated Secretary Joanne Cook for completing five years of service to SANBAG.

Board President Dennis Hansberger and Executive Director Tony Grasso (pictured with Cook at left) presented her with a pin to commemorate her longevity with the agency.

■ Rail service to Redlands?

Approval of plans to expand passenger rail service from San Bernardino to Redlands was delayed a month after Board members requested more time to review the results of a study completed this winter.

The study focused on seven proposed station locations, land uses around the stations, support for "transit villages" or "transit oriented development," pedestrian-friendly designs, parking options and more. Community support for mixed land uses is needed to secure federal funding.

The Board will discuss the item again in April.

SANBAG March Travel Tip . . .

More help for county motorists is on the way this month as SANBAG expands its Freeway Service Patrol program. The FSP is a roving team of tow trucks that help stranded motorists at no charge to them. New service is underway on Interstate 215 from 2nd Street to University Parkway in San Bernardino and on Interstate 10 from Waterman Avenue to Orange Street in Redlands.



Down the road . . .

- March 14: Administrative Committee, 9 a.m.
- March 15: Major Projects Committee, 9 a.m.
- March 16: Mountain-Desert Committee, 9 a.m.
- March 21: Plans & Programs Committee, 1 p.m.
- March 22: Commuter Rail Committee, 9 a.m.
- March 22-23: City County Conference
- March 29: Open House, State Street Grade Separation Project, 4:30 p.m.-6:30 p.m.

Board approves new highway, transit funding Funds allocated through new category of Proposition 1B

Funds were allocated for highway and transit projects across San Bernardino County in the second round of funding authorized by Proposition 1B. Unlike the Corridor Mobility Improvement Account, which involved intense competition for funding statewide, the amount returned to San Bernardino County was determined by a formula based on county population and lane miles that is already in use. The SANBAG Board then had discretion to allocate these funds to high priority projects.

This \$2 billion statewide pot of funds served to augment the State Transportation Improvement Program, which is adopted in April of even-numbered years.



Funding was approved for two new High Desert interchanges — Ranchero Road in Hesperia and La Mesa/Nisqualli Road in Victorville — both of which are designed to help improve traffic circulation and relieve motorist delays now experienced on Bear Valley Road, above.

This STIP augmentation brought \$97 million in new revenue to SANBAG, helping to relieve a little of the sting from the funding shortfall experienced in the first round of funding for the Corridor Mobility Improvement Account late last month. When added to \$64.1 million from the 2006 STIP, this created a total of \$161.4 million to be allocated.

This month's edition of *Street Smart* provides a summary of projects slated for funding through this STIP augmentation.

Cost Increases

Double-digit and triple-digit increases in the price of steel, concrete and other building materials have caused project costs to soar during the past three years. This led Board members to allocate a substantial portion of the new funds — close to \$97 million out of the \$161.4 million available — to cover these cost escalations on current projects, including Interstate 215.

"We are having to use our precious resources to cover these cost increases, rather than being able to program these funds directly to new projects across our county," said Executive Director Tony Grasso. "This makes it hard for us to move forward on new projects and makes every dollar even more important to us."

Remaining Funding—Highway Projects

In addition to the cost increases on current freeway projects, funding also was approved for five interchange projects across San Bernardino County. These include:

- Improvements to the Cherry Avenue interchange on Interstate 10 in Fontana, \$3.9 million

- Improvements to the Citrus Avenue on Interstate 10 in Fontana, \$3.2 million
- Improvements to the Riverside Avenue interchange on Interstate 10 in Rialto, \$1.45 million
- Construction of a new interchange on Interstate 15 at Ranchero Road in Hesperia, \$7.03 million
- Construction of a new interchange on Interstate 15 at La Mesa Road/Nisqualli Road in Victorville, \$11.5 million

The Cherry Avenue and Citrus Avenue interchanges are part of the first phase of improvements planned on Interstate 10 prior to the addition of carpool lanes east of Interstate 15. The bridge spans of these freeway over-crossings need to be lengthened before carpool lanes can be built. Funding for Cherry and Citrus—plus the interchange at Riverside Avenue in Rialto—all had been requested through the Proposition 1B Corridor Mobility Improvement Account, but no funding was given to these projects.

About \$7.6 million also was placed in reserve for future funding of High Desert interchanges in the 2008 STIP.

Remaining Funding—Transit Projects

The STIP requires a portion of funds to be allocated for public transit, such as passenger rail or bus programs. SANBAG allocated \$29.9 million to enhance the following transit operations:

- Chaffey College Transcenter, Rancho Cucamonga, \$3 million
- Omnitrans sbX bus rapid transit service, Loma Linda-San Bernardino corridor, \$5 million
- Metrolink passenger cars, \$5.5 million
- Metrolink station pedestrian under-crossing, Rancho Cucamonga, \$2.85 million
- Engineering/design for new passenger rail service, San Bernardino-Redlands, \$5 million
- Construction of new passenger rail service, San Bernardino-Redlands, \$6.3 million
- Yucca Valley Transit Center, \$700,000
- Compressed natural gas line for new Victor Valley Transit Facility, \$1.6 million